

The Pathfinder

The Good News From 2021

Your support made a real difference for our families during yet another challenging year. You helped our neighbors weather the pandemic and keep setting and working toward their goals for brighter futures ahead.

In 2021, Britepaths and the Financial Empowerment Center at South County served 8,573 families, impacting the lives of 12,722 people. Your generous donations, and the support of 366 volunteers serving 4,676 hours, made this possible. Thank You!

Highlights:

- **Building Resilience: 1,841 People** received Financial Empowerment and Workforce Development services, impacting 3,364 family members.
- **Stabilizing Families: 1,192 Households** received Food and/or Financial Assistance, assisting 3,975 people.
- **Supports for Children: 6,813 Children** received Food4Thought, Back to School, Holiday or Financial Literacy services.

"I was at risk of losing my home at a time when I was sick and I couldn't work. This money helped me tremendously by paying my rent."

— Ms. R, Financial Assistance Client

Connecting Again at Artful Living!



We can't wait to connect with our community once again at Artful Living: Connected! We hope you'll join us for a joyful evening of art, wine and strengthening our community. The event is Thursday, May 19 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Country Club of Fairfax (5110 Ox Road, Fairfax, VA).

We'll enjoy a juried art exhibition with art for sale, a live auction, raffles, live music by Batida Diferente, exquisite food and drinks, and an opportunity to hear from our clients. Proceeds benefit the families we serve.

We chose our theme, "Connected," in 2019 and had planned to hold the event in April 2020. As with so many events in our lives, the pandemic caused us to postpone the gathering twice.

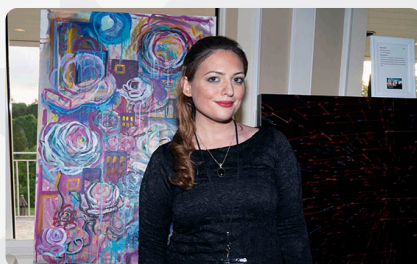
We are so looking forward to reconnecting with our community! Our theme is now more relevant than ever, and our neighbors need our services more than ever.

Register at:
britepaths.org/event/artful-living.

Contact Sidney Arrington at events@britepaths.org or 703.273.8829 with questions.

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

Anthem
Ken and Linda Kozloff in Honor of Marcelle Miles
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Artist Taylor Marie with her work "Hope Is On The Rise" at our 2019 Artful Living event. Photo by Hernan Vargas.



Mission

Britepaths provides our neighbors in need with short-term safety-net services and empowers them to work toward long-term self-sufficiency.

Services

- Stabilizing Families
- Building Resilience
- Supports for Children

Board of Directors

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Thank You, Volunteers!



April is National Volunteer Month, but we are grateful for our volunteers every day! We have been celebrating with photos and messages from staff on our website and in social media. Financial Programs Manager Diana Ortega said, "Thank You for going above and beyond. We see you!"

View photos at: britepaths.org/about-us/stories.



Seeking IT Company Partnerships



Britepaths and the Financial Empowerment Center at South County are seeking partnerships with IT companies in Northern Virginia and the greater Washington, D.C. area that are looking to hire apprentices or entry-level employees from diverse backgrounds with IT and cloud computing certifications.

Our first AWS re/Start cohort concluded and received their Certified Cloud Practitioner certification in January. We currently have our first Google IT/ CompTIA A+ cohort and a second AWS re/Start cohort underway.

Contact Sally Meyer at 703.273.8829 or slmeyer@britepaths.org.

In the Photo: Our staff met with Robin Mugaas of Executive 1 Holding Company (bottom right), which recruits employees for our long-time supporter HumanTouch, LLC. She will consider our IT training graduates for relevant job openings, and is serving as a guest speaker in our classes.

Please, Let My Car Start...

“Hello my name is Melissa. I’m a single mom and have a 7-year-old daughter. I wanted to thank you so much for getting my car maintenance request approved.

“I sincerely appreciate everything you and your supervisor did for me and my daughter. Without these generous donations, I’m not sure how much longer I could have gone with my car running the way it is.

“I’m the closing manager at my job, so many nights I walk out of the store late.

“Many nights I was praying, ‘Please let my car start so I can pick up my daughter and make it back home safe.’ My daughter asked, ‘Mommy is the car gonna start today?’ I would say, ‘I don’t know baby, we gonna see once I put my key in’ lol.”

We are so glad that Britepaths was able to help Melissa and her daughter have safe, reliable transportation again!

Britepaths’ “Reliable Rides” is a special segment of our Financial Assistance Program that helps fund major car repairs for Fairfax

County residents in crisis so they can maintain their cars safely and continue to get to work to support their families. It is the only car repair assistance program in Fairfax County, and one of few in Northern Virginia.

Our Financial Assistance Program is made possible by grants from the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia, Fairfax County’s Consolidated Community Funding Pool, Cloudbreak Foundation, St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church, Transurban 495-95 Express Lanes Community Grant Program, and supporters like you.

Read more at: britepaths.org/story/please-let-my-car-start.



Together Again!

Britepaths and Financial Empowerment Center at South County staff were excited to gather together in person with our Board of Directors once again for our annual Planning Retreat on March 19. We have been meeting virtually for the last two years, and with several new staff and Board members, many of us were seeing each other in person for the first time. We discussed our next three-year Strategic Plan, DEIA vision and other important issues. Learn more and see photos at: britepaths.org/story/board-staff-retreat-2022.

A Fresh Look for britepaths.org

Britepaths is pleased to introduce our new website, launched on February 9. Technology changes necessitated the update, and also offered an opportunity to freshen our look and make it easier than ever for community members to get help or get involved.

A big thank you to Design TLC for the design and construction of the new site, AGH Strategies for migrating our database system and our pro bono IT provider Macro Systems LLC for assisting with the launch.

Visit us at britepaths.org to see our new look.

Help Our Kids Go Back to School

Britepaths will once again partner with Fairfax County’s Collect for Kids initiative to ensure that 2,500 students at our partner schools are able to start the 2022-23 school year with everything they need to succeed.

We hope you will plan to support our effort this summer by donating funds and/or backpacks. We are grateful to Twins Ace Hardware Fairfax for once again offering a “round up” at the register in July. Other program sponsorships are also greatly welcome.

Details coming in June on our Back to School page at britepaths.org.

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